ANNUAL REPORT 2005/2006

LEGISLATIVE LIBRARY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA
3 3298 00337 3942

DOC
BC
C444
B
2005/06
c.3

Child and Youth Officer for British Columbia

Library and Archives Canada Cataloguing in Publication Data

Child and Youth Officer for British Columbia. Annual Report. – 2003/04–

Annual Report year ends Mar. 31.

Vol. for 2003/04 has title: Stay the course.

Available also on the Internet.

Continues: British Columbia. Officer for Children and Youth. Annual Report. ISSN 1708-4458.

ISSN 1716-6144 = Annual report (Child and Youth Officer for British Columbia)

1. Child and Youth Officer for British Columbia – Periodicals. 2. Children – Services for – British Columbia – Periodicals. 3. Youth – Services for – British Columbia – Periodicals. 4. Child welfare – Government policy – British Columbia – Periodicals. I. Title. II. Child and Youth Officer for British Columbia annual report.

HV745.B7 C54 2006 353.5360971105 C2005-802595-2

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Transmittal Letter 2

What the Child and Youth Officer Does 3

Review of 2005/2006 4

- Publications Submitted or Released 4
- Projects and Activities 5
- Advocacy Statistics – April 1, 2005 to March 31, 2006 6
- 2005/2006 Expenditures 7

Contact Information 8

2007-03968/

Honourable Wally Oppal, QC
Attorney General of British Columbia

I am pleased to submit the annual report for the 2005-2006 year. The report covers a period for which Jane Morley, Q.C. was the Child and Youth Officer for British Columbia. As you will note from the report, Ms. Morley's work as Child and Youth Officer made a significant contribution to bringing a child-centered focus to public attention through a variety of advocacy, monitoring and reporting activities.

I was appointed Acting Child and Youth Officer on January 1, 2007 in order to provide for the orderly transition to the new Office of the Representative for Children and Youth. The filing of this annual report does not cover activities during my term and this will be reported on according to the *Representative for Children and Youth Act*. Jane Morley has kindly reviewed the contents of the annual report and has indicated her agreement.

Mary Ellen Turpel-Lafond
Acting Child and Youth Officer
Province of British Columbia

WHAT THE CHILD AND YOUTH OFFICER DOES

The Child and Youth Officer is independent, is not part of the Ministry of Children and Family Development and is not directed by any minister in how the statutory duties are carried out.

The mandate of the Child and Youth Officer is set out in the *Office for Children and Youth Act*. According to the act the Child and Youth Officer's role is to:

- **support** – by working collaboratively with children, youth, families, communities, and government to improve access to relevant government services;
- **observe** – by asking questions and gathering information and perspectives on the effectiveness, responsiveness and relevance of services;
- **advise** – by building on what has been learned and by sharing ideas for improvement with communities, governments and the public.

The mandate focuses on government-funded services for children and youth, which includes but is not limited to:

- family support, child protection, adoption and guardianship
- early childhood development and care
- children and youth with disabilities
- child and youth mental health
- addictions
- youth justice
- transition to adulthood

The Child and Youth Officer's authority can be delegated to others. A team of about 20 people work out of two offices in Victoria and Vancouver. In their work the Child and Youth Officer and her team consider:

- the relevant Aboriginal cultural and historical contests in British Columbia
- the ethno-cultural composition of communities
- the needs of children and youth with disabilities
- the particular challenges for children and youth in government care
- the opportunities for child and youth participation

PUBLICATIONS SUBMITTED OR RELEASED

Special Reports

Healthy Early Childhood Development in British Columbia – *released September 2005*. Resulting from a collaborative project with stakeholder groups interested in early childhood development. This special report built on the dialogue that took place at the Healthy Child B.C. Forum, held November 2004, and ideas for joint action that were identified.

Sayt K'üülm Goot – of One Heart: Preventing Aboriginal Youth Suicide Through Youth and Community Engagement – *released April 2006*. Resulted from a project developed in partnership with the First Nations Summit and with the support of the Union of B.C. Indian Chiefs, the United Native Nations and the Métis Provincial Council of B.C.

Investigation Report

Report to the Attorney General of British Columbia under Section 6 of the *Office for Children and Youth Act* on the Ministry of Children and Family Development Director's Case Review relating to the death of the Nuu-chah-nulth child who died in Port Alberni on September 4, 2002. *Submitted February 2006*

Issue Papers

Brief reports on specific issues that include observations and advice to the provincial government.

Issue Paper 1: **Child and Youth Mental Health: Access to Services for Under-Serviced Populations**. How can the child and youth mental health plan reverse the trend of high risk and minority children and youth becoming increasingly disproportionately represented among those who are not gaining access to the formal child and youth mental health system in British Columbia? *Released July 2005*

Issue Paper 2: **The Convention on the Rights of the Child: A Framework for Public Policy in British Columbia**. Can the principles embedded in the international *Convention on the Rights of the Child* and Canada's national action plan *A Canada Fit for Children*, be used to develop a framework for a non-partisan, made-in-British Columbia plan to guide the development and implementation of a unified, cross-ministry, community-based approach to planning and delivery of services for children, youth and families? *Released September 2005*

Issue Paper 3: **Towards Knowing How Effectively the B.C. Government is Supporting Children and Youth**. How can government use data that the government collects about the services and outcomes for children and youth to increase its knowledge about how effective it is in supporting children and youth? *Released September 2005*

Issue Paper 4: **Towards a Strengths-Based Approach to Government Policy and Services for Children and Youth in British Columbia.** How can the principles underlying the *Convention on the Rights of the Child*, linked with findings in resilience research and resilience-based practice models, guide the development of a cross-ministry plan to achieve the government's stated vision of children in the province "being supported to be the best they can be physically, intellectually, socially and emotionally"? *Released March 2006*

Project Report

Asking Questions Project – A report on general themes resulting from meetings with 59 groups and interviews with 47 individuals, asking those who are involved with child, youth and family services in British Columbia, questions about the state of those services, about what was working and what was not. *Released August 2005*

Other

Speak Up and Be Heard: Steps to Effective Advocacy – a guide to help people advocate for themselves or for another person, particularly in the area of services for children and youth. It suggests ways in which young people can gain some power and control over their own life, by participating in and influencing decisions that affect them. *Produced October 2005*

PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES

Advocacy support for children and youth — provided support for children, youth and other individuals who were having trouble getting a service they needed or who disagreed with a decision that had been made; promoted self-advocacy and individual advocacy (advocacy on behalf of individuals by others in the community), as well as openness among service providers to both meaningful participation and advocacy. See statistics on page 6.

Meaningful participation workshops – delivered 12 one-day workshops for Ministry of Children and Family Development staff, contracted agency staff, foster parents and other groups, looking at effective ways to support meaningful participation from legislative, research and practical perspectives.

Rights 2 Success workshops – in partnership with the Federation of B.C. Youth in Care Networks and the Ministry of Children and Family Development, piloted in eight communities, workshops on children's rights and advocacy for children and youth in care and at-risk children and youth.

Service Gaps for Youth – in partnership with the Ministry of Children and Family Development, Vancouver Coastal region, addressed the lack of services for youth in care who have high special needs as a result of FASD and who need supports in order to transition out of care. A special report will be produced.

Outcomes of child care policy decisions – in partnership with the Human Early Learning Partnership at the University of British Columbia, analyzed three provincial government child care data bases to identify government policies and programs which effectively support families and advance the optimal development of all children.

Outcomes for children in care – in partnership with the British Columbia Public Health Officer, developed a descriptive analysis of children in care. A report is being produced that describes the results of selected health and well-being indicators for children and youth.

Youth engagement: Conversations About Change – interviewed groups of youth and individual youth about their experiences with the services provided or funded by the provincial government, and their vision for an effective network of services for young people in the province. A project report will be produced.

Family Group Conferencing Evaluation – in partnership with Ministry of Children and Family Development found out how FGC is being implemented in British Columbia and the outcomes of the implementation. A literature review was completed in October 2005.

Youth Services – A Year in Review – in partnership with the Ministry of Children and Family Development, Fraser Region, evaluated the planning and implementation process for integrated community-based youth services in the Fraser Region.

Aboriginal Youth Engagement – worked with Aboriginal youth in the Vancouver area to develop a consistent and cohesive framework for Aboriginal youth engagement in policy and research.

Youth Suicide and HIV/AIDS Prevention Forum – in partnership with First Nations Summit, First Nations Inuit Health Branch, Northern Health Authority and Aboriginal Health Branch, Ministry of Health organized a forum to reach Aboriginal youth in the North. The forum was held in June 2006.

ADVOCACY STATISTICS – APRIL 1, 2005 TO MARCH 31, 2006

	Adult Calls	Youth Calls	Total
Total	746	106	852

	Adult	Youth	%
Vancouver Coastal	125	13	16%
Vancouver Island	165	17	21%
Fraser	203	36	28%
Interior	134	25	19%
North	63	5	8%
*Others	56	10	8%

*Others means caller placed call from out of province or origin of caller not specified

	Adult	Youth	%
MCFD	414	55	55%
MEIA	19	7	3%
Custody & Access	114	3	14%
Addiction	3	3	1%
Mental Health	8	2	1%
Youth Services	16	27	5%
*Others	172	9	21%

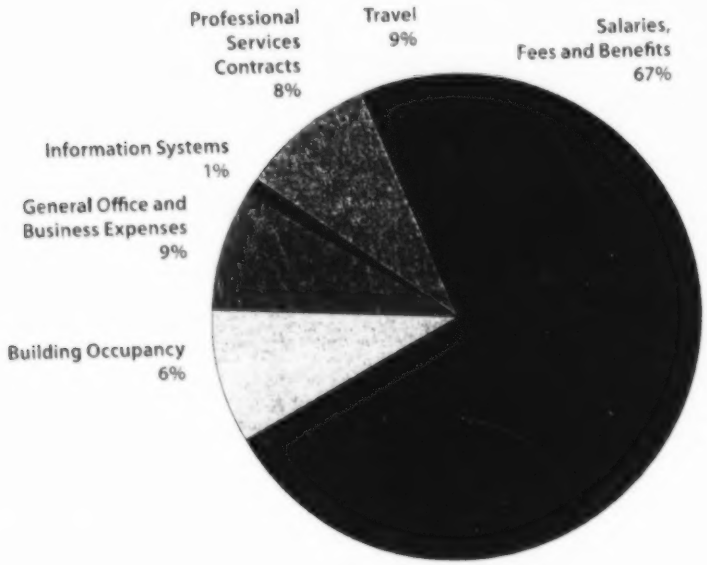
*Others means caller inquired about information or referral services that is not ministry related

Support Provided	Adult Call	Youth Calls	Total of File Number
Enhanced	43	72	115
Extraordinary Advocacy	3	14	17
Information/Support	631	9	640
Referral–Family Justice	68	0	68
Referral – Other	3	1	4
Systemic Advice	8		8

2005/2006 EXPENDITURES

(for the period April 1, 2005 to March 31, 2006)

Description	Amount ($)	Percentage (%)
Salaries, Fees and Benefits	1,627,966	67%
Travel	222,854	9%
Professional Services Contracts	194,975	8%
Information Systems	19,379	1%
General Office and Business Expenses	213,871	9%
Building Occupancy	147,589	6%
Grants	500	0%
Total Expenditures	2,427,134	100%



CONTACT INFORMATION

The Office of the Child and Youth Officer is being replaced by the Office of the Representative for Children and Youth.

How to contact the Office of the Representative for Children and Youth

By phone

In Victoria 356-6710

Elsewhere in B.C. Toll free 1-800-476-3833

By e-mail

rcy@rcybc.ca

By mail

P.O. Box 9207 Stn Prov Govt

Victoria, BC V8W 9J1

At our offices

Vancouver, 901-808 West Hastings Street

Victoria, 4th Floor, 1019 Wharf Street

www.rcybc.ca

Child and Youth Officer for British Columbia